

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6153

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN

SUBJECT: FIVE YEAR PLAN - COMMENTS OF MINPLANNING

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH VISITING OMB OFFICIALS AND EMBOFF AUGUST 17, MINPLANNING AL IMAM SAID HE EXPECTS SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION OF FIVE-YEAR PLAN BY NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER. NUMBER OF PROJECTS WILL DEFINITELY BE PREPARED IN DETAIL BY THAT TIME FOR SUBMISSION TO WORLD BANK CONSULTATIVE GROUP, ACCORDING MINISTER. HE EXPRESSED HOPE THIS WILL HAVE EFFECT OF PROVIDING FIRM BASIS FOR SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF PROJECT FUNDING IN 1977 AS OFFSET TO EXPECTED INVESTMENT SHORTFALL. PREPARATION OF OVERALL PLAN WILL CONTINUE ON PRIORITY BASIS UNDER DEPMIN ABDEL MEGUID DURING COMING RAMADAN SEASON AND ELECTION PERIOD, FOR SUBMISSION TO NEW ADMINISTRATION AND PEOPLES ASSEMBLY WHEN INSTALLED.

2. MINISTER AL IMAM FRANKLY STATED HE IS WORKING HARD TO GET THIS OVERDUE FIVE-YEAR PLAN "OUT OF WAY" SO AS TO BEGIN RATIONALIZATION OF WHOLE PLANNING PROCESS. HE WAS CRITICAL OF PREVIOUS GOE PLANNING EFFORTS AND CURRENT APPROACH TO ECONOMIC PLANNING, NOTING THAT EMPHASIS IS PLACED WITHIN GOE ON ENDS WITH LITTLE OR NO ATTENTION PAID TO MEANS. IN HIS VIEW, POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF VARIOUS PROGRAMS UNDER DISCUSSION ARE NOT FULLY

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UNDERSTOOD AND ALTERNATIVES ARE NOT EXPLORED. PLANNING IN

EGYPT, TO PARAPHRASE MINISTER, IS EXERCISE IN PREPARATION OF  
SERIES OF TABLES ON PROPOSED INVESTMENT.

3. DR. AL IMAM'S SOLUTION TO UNSATISFACTORY STATE OF AFFAIRS  
IS STRENGTHENED ROLE FOR MINPLANNING, MOST PROBABLY ACHIEVED  
BY HAVING MINISTRY ATTACHED DIRECTLY TO OFFICE OF PRIME MINISTER.  
ONLY WITH SUCH AUTHORITY CAN PLANNING EFFORT BE EXPANDED TO  
INCLUDE MEANINGFUL CONSIDERATION OF PRIORITIES AND ALTERNATIVE  
COURSES OF ACTION. MINISTER STRESSED URGENCY OF EGYPT'S  
ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND NOTED MISTAKEN PRE-OPEN DOOR POLICIES  
AS JUSTIFICATION FOR HIS CONCERN AND NECESSITY FOR IMPROVED  
MECHANISM.

4. COMMENT: MINISTER AL IMAM IS TRAINED ECONOMIST EXPERIENCED  
IN PLANNING FIELD WHO RETURNED TO EGYPT ONLY THIS YEAR TO ACCEPT  
CABINET POST AFTER YEARS ABROAD WITH UN. HIS PREDECESSOR IN  
JOB (IBRAHIM HELMI ABDEL RAHMAN) BROKE HIS LANCE  
ON SAME SET OF PROBLEMS AND, WE HEAR, ASKED TO BE  
RELIEVED AT TIME OF APRIL 1976 CABINET RESHUFFLE.  
EILTS

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